

# A PEEK INSIDE THE AUDITOR'S OFFICE

Issue 8

November 2016

## ERIE COUNTY AUDITOR NEWSLETTER

### A side note from our Auditor

Great news from the Auditor of State, for the second year in a row we have no specific material findings. In other words, Erie County has a clean audit! My sincere 'Thank You' to all departments that helped make this happen. Bottom line, we got here because we are all "doing the right thing". I can only encourage you to ask before you act when you are not sure what the correct approach should be. If in doubt, contact my office or myself and we will assist in making the right decision.

You will see towards the end of this newsletter that Sue Kane retired in September, after 25 years of service with the Auditor's Office. She was recognized by the Auditor of State with a proclamation that was given to her at a special ceremony by our County Commission, prior to the start of their regular meeting. We will miss her and hope she enjoys her time off.

Our Weights & Measures Department participated in a state-wide gas pump skimmer sweep through the Labor Day

weekend. Unfortunately, we found 2 skimmers in Erie County. We continue to monitor gas pumps, and the local media coverage helped us to educate both the merchants and public regarding this issue. We are working with our merchants to ensure the risk is eliminated.

REVAL for 2018 is underway. Our staff has identified a system that will give us street level photo's and is saving the county over \$100,000 every six years when we completely revalue all properties.

As we approach this holiday season, we need to be thankful for the freedoms and rights we enjoy in this country and those that protect and defend those freedoms. Pray for those in harms way. Thank the Veterans for their service. Also thank those in law enforcement and our First Responders for the selfless performance of their jobs and the risk they face daily to make our community a great place to live and work. Stay safe and Happy Holidays!



Richard Jeffrey



### GAS PUMP SKIMMER FORUM

Our Weights & Measures Inspector, Jeff Fantozzi, while out on routine inspections and testing of retail motor fuel dispensers, uncovered two credit card skimmers across our County. As a result of this, Auditor Rick Jeffrey and Sheriff Paul Sigsworth hosted a Gas Pump Skimmer Forum at the Erie County Sheriff's Department on September 14. This summit provided the media, law enforcement, gas station and convenient store owners/operators the opportunity to expand their knowledge regarding the illegal use of credit card skimmers. The purpose was to increase the efforts in preventing further escalation of these practices in our County. Our Weights & Measures Inspector Jeff, our Auditor Rick and Sheriff Sigsworth wanted to ensure the public that our County is working together to shut down these

skimmers. The intent was NOT to scare taxpayers but rather inform them and educate them on ways they can help. Main points of interest included in this forum were as follows:

- \*Pay with cash and/or pay inside
- \*Use pumps closer to the store
- \*Look for tamper-proof seals
- \*NEVER use a debit card, use a credit card or prepaid gas card
- \*Be ALERT and report any suspicious activity!

The Erie County Auditor's Office is in the process of working in conjunction with surrounding counties to host the same presentation with the Owner/Operators of the fuel stations to further educate them when such criminal acts occur.

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## STAFF SPOTLIGHTS



Dave McDowell

Dave has been with the Auditor's Office since 2013 as the Commercial Appraiser, specializing in the valuation of the County's Commercial, Industrial and Exempt properties. He also assists in the property valuation of new construction and the properties that have cases filed with the Board of Revision. Dave has over 19 years experience in Real Estate Appraisal. He is a Certified General Real Estate Appraiser from the State of Ohio. Dave also holds

designation as an Assessment Administration Specialist from the International Association of Assessing Officers Organization. He graduated from Tiffin University with an Undergraduate Degree in Accounting and Business Administration, and completed Graduate school with his MBA. Dave has three children Leah who is 8 years old, Lexi who is 6 years old and his son Mack whom is 5 years old. With three little kids all under the age of 10 he keeps extremely busy

with them. His kids are involved in everything from gymnastics, dance, tee-ball, soccer and hockey. Dave spends most weekends sharing his love of the outdoors with his kids, taking them to different parks, beaches and other adventures in nature. Dave is also an avid hunter and takes time when he can to indulge in that past-time.



Holly Printy

Holly has been with the Auditor's Office for a year and half as the Payroll/ Accounts Payable Clerk. She previously was employed by the City of Huron water billing department and assisted with payroll and accounts payable. Prior to that she was the HR assistant/benefits specialist for WSOS Community Action Commission for 7 years. Holly participated in the CALA

(Community Action Leadership Academy) while employed at WSOS. She was born and raised in Fremont and graduated from Clyde in 1997. She attended Terra Community College where she earned her Associates Degree in Accounting. Holly has been married to her husband Nate for 13 years and they have 2 beautiful daughters, Madison who is 10 years old

and Macie whom is 8. The girls keep them busy with softball, swimming and soccer! For family time they enjoy camping together on the weekends in their camper. Holly is also an avid Ohio State Buckeye fan.

## GIS BOARD UPDATE

The Erie County GIS (geographical information systems) Advisory Board provides accurate and up to date geographical information. This system is utilized by the County and any of the subdivisions in order to communicate effectively for the purpose of public service. The software, training and data will be made available to all members. Every 5 years the GIS Advisory Board renews

the current contract, and this year they are finalizing their 2017-2022 agreement, which includes the villages, cities, townships, county departments/agencies and The Erie Metro Parks. The members use GIS Solutions to improve the efficiencies and effectiveness of tasks ranging from the emergency 911 system to property appraisals. The GIS Advisory Board meets as necessary for any issues that may arise throughout the year.

The newer web based applications provide quick and accurate answers based on facts. To learn more please visit their website:

<http://ecgisab.maps.arcgis.com/home/index.html>

## STATE AUDIT RESULTS

In accordance with the Government Auditing Standards, Erie County was audited by the Auditor of State for the fiscal year 2015. There were no significant internal control deficiencies such as: fraud or noncompliance with laws and regulations or no abuse/noncompliance with contract or grant agreements. There was no specific or nonspecific material findings. Constructive comments made included: updating electronic records and electronic banking

policies, including WIA and CDBG grants with the Federal Awards. Other recommended procedural updates given were: landfill procedures, JFS Medicaid procedures, Care Facility Accounts Receivable, employee leave balance policies (specifically for those departments that do not give balances to the Auditor's Office) and Capital Asset Useful Lives review.

You may review our yearly financial reports via our website:

[www.erie.iviewauditor.com](http://www.erie.iviewauditor.com)

These reports are found on the left column under "Office Responsibilities" labeled "Annual Financial Reports". The reports for the current audit is the **2015 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR)** and the **2015 Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR)**.

## REVAL UPDATE

The Erie County Auditor's Office began reviewing every property in the County as of May 2016. We are using a new Paperless Reappraisal System to verify the characteristics for each parcel, ensuring that everything is accurate and current. This process uses aerial and street level photography, building sketches/footprints and tabular property data via a desktop application. This allows every pre-existing detail to be reviewed and processed for field checks and value review. All field work is done using a

mobile application, which ensures that measurements are correct and pictures are current. The use of GIS (geographical information system) and the related technologies for this project enables that all factors available are being utilized to provide a fair and equitable value for each parcel. The 2018 REVAL project will reach completion around June 2018. The Erie County Auditor will then submit the values and all sales data to the State of Ohio Department of Taxation to generate the new tax rates for the 2018 pay 2019 tax bills.

Recently the REVAL team spent a full day on Kelley's Island reviewing property information, taking street level photography, along with testing mobile tablet equipment that will be used for our REVAL fieldwork.

Rick's vehicle was attached with street level photography cameras for updated pictures of the Island



**CONTACT US**



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**SUE KANE'S RETIREMENT**

After 25 years of public service in the Auditor's Office, Sue Kane retired as of September 30, 2016. She worked under 6 auditor's during her years of service to Erie County. Sue has also served as The Village of Castalia Clerk, a member of the Mental Health and Recovery Board and she continues her current membership of volunteering for the Serving Our Seniors Board. Ms. Kane's

25 years of public service was recognized by The Auditor of State Dave Yost and a special awards ceremony was held in her honor. Sue plans on spending more time on the golf course, traveling and enjoying her time off with her kids, grandkids and great grandkids. She will be missed by not only our office but many others throughout Erie County.



Robin Reed, Holly Printy, Brenda Hurst, Tammy Sennish, Jeff Fantozzi, Sue Kane, John Rogers, Jean Siegel, Auditor Rick Jeffrey

**2ND ANNUAL HALLOWEEN PARTY**

The Auditor's Office hosted the 2nd Annual **Halloween** Potluck. We had participation from every department in the building! There was an optional costume contest with prizes awarded:

**Most Creative**-Gary Joiner as "Winner, Winner, Chicken Dinner"

**Overall Best**-Ellie Olsen, Toni Fritz and Niki Woodruff as the witches from the movie *Hocus Pocus*

Here are a few pictures of some costumes: The Title Office as The Wizard of Oz and below are the participants from The Auditor's Office. We look forward to hosting more holiday themed parties to bring unity and camaraderie to the downtown County building!

